Summary

Suma Root and Beta-Ecdysone

Suma Root (*Pfaffia paniculata*) also known as Brazilian Ginseng is a powerful immune enhancing herb\(^1\). Moreover, it is a powerful adaptogenic herb that has been used to enhance athletic performance\(^1,2\). The adaptogenic phyto-active components of Suma Root have been identified as ecdysteroids\(^3\). These phyto-active compounds have been reported\(^1,2\) to have the following effects in humans: lowering cholesterol, balancing blood sugar levels, immune-modulating and anti-arrhythmic effects as well as hepatoprotective effects. Ecdysteroids also have been shown to significantly increase protein synthesis in skeletal muscle\(^4\). More than 150 ecdysteroids have been identified in plants\(^3\). One of the best-known ecdysteroids is *beta*-ecdysone (20-hydroxyecdysone). Suma Root is a rich source of *beta*-ecdysone. It is suspected that *beta*-ecdysone was used as an adaptogen in the 1980’s to enhance performance of Russian Olympic Athletes. Ecdysteroids were recently banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency under Section S2, “peptide hormones, growth factors and related substances due to the similar chemical structure or similar biological effects”\(^5\).

References


This information is for educational purposes only. It is not meant to be used to diagnose, treat or cure any medical condition.